1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NEó Bellacoola NEó

855 well, and these are soon learnt by the child who is fortunate
[847] enough to have many kinsmen. Primarily, responsibility rests with the parents for the care and support of their offspring, but they have the advice, assistance, and material aid of their relatives. Nor are these limited to the near kindred of either father or mother; all members of the ancestral family take their part. Housemates, also, even if unrelated, take an interest in any child who shares their habitation, irrespective of his rank.

Much of the care bestowed on children is of a magical nature and must be reserved until a later chapter. Little boys
868 follow their fathers on hunting expeditions and so acquire knowledge by practical experience, as do girls from their mothers with regard to household tasks and feminine occupations.
867 Even small children are quick to notice the attention paid to the orders of chiefs, and carry out their commands without
861 demur. A disobedient child is beaten or thrown into cold water; the parents usually act in such cases, though a near relative does not hesitate to do so, especially if he is a chief.
857 Like all other children, Bella Coola boys and girls are fond of
867 stories and listen eagerly to the tales told in the long evenings by some old man or woman. Many of these are somewhat
538 obscene, but they serve to teach much ancient lore, and at the same time to emphasize many taboos and restrictions which are thus assimilated without definite schooling. They illus-
[626] trate the laws of morality, as does the public disapproval shown to anyone who infringes some point of etiquette or behaviour.
[825] If a child makes fun of a cat-fish or a bull-head, he is not told to stop doing so; instead, one of his elders tells him how, in the distant past, there was a famine, and advises him not to scoff at the fish which alone saved his ancestors from starvation at
[732] that time. If a rude little boy laughs at a maimed or deformed man, he is told of *Ăiăläk*, a Bella Bella urchin who repeatedly mocked a one-eyed man and presently, himself, lost the sight of an eye.

867 "Don't laugh at cripples, blind people, or those who are
[795]

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

the most *human* of all substances, and, therefore, a potent protection against supernatural beings. It is valuable as a defence against evil monsters, but it is equally deadly to shamans and other human beings with supernatural powers. In the distant past, Raven taught mankind that to sleep with a menstruating woman would so blind a man that he would be unsuccessful in hunting. The belief is that animals, knowing everything that takes place, avoid one who is so unclean. One old man mentioned that he had failed to obey this injunction and considered his loss of virility as a punishment, overlooking the fact that he was over seventy years of age.

The coming of adolescence in a boy is recognized by change in voice and the other usual indications. He is neither taboo nor unclean, and consequently does not have to undergo any restrictions on his actions. There is no ceremony to mark the entry of a youth into adult membership of the tribe; instead, this comes gradually and puberty is no more than an indication of increasing age and strength.

Marriage

Like most so-called "primitive" peoples, the Bella Coola regard the married state as the normal condition of man. Anyone unwilling to wed is considered unnatural. Since the number of the sexes is approximately equal, the only persons found to live alone are elderly widows and widowers, and those crippled, either mentally or physically. Such individuals are looked upon as unfortunate; in fact, they have failed in one of the most fundamental of life's struggles. Man provides fish and game, builds houses and canoes, while woman collects berries, makes baskets, cooks, and performs the multitudinous small household tasks.

"Is it not to the benefit of each to marry?" say the Bella Coola.

Marriage is not a mere economic arrangement, nor is its sole function to regulate relations between the sexes. Its most important feature is that it governs the status of the child.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

phases of activity, leaving here only certain rules about diet and a number of prohibitions which hunters must observe. 784

FOOD TABOOS OBSERVED BY WOMEN 262

Women must not eat bear meat. To do so would derange the catamenia and cause profuse growth of hair. 562 841

Women of child-bearing age must not eat beaver. To do so would cause a difficult delivery. 826

A woman of child-bearing age must not eat roasted salmon until the sticks have been removed which hold it in front of the fire. She will bear twins if this injunction is disregarded. 844 845

TABOOS OBSERVED BY HUNTERS

No hunter or fisherman may leave the village in the morning if he has been foolish enough to break the night's fast. It is customary to depart at dawn and take a small meal when nearing the hunting or fishing-ground. 224 226 264

No hunter may drink water in which dog salmon have been soaked. Animals dislike this liquid and avoid a man with it in his stomach.

When traps have been set, and a party of hunters is sitting around the camp-fire in the evening, no one must pass between it and one of his fellows. If this should be done, heedlessly, animals would disregard the bait that has been set out.

When mountain goat hunters are travelling, the most expert must lead the party. When he sits down, so must the others, and no one can change places with him. This is said to be a custom of the Carriers as well as of the Bella Coola. 171

When a hunter is cutting up a bear, he must be careful not to cut a vein which is said to run across the chest and down each fore-paw. To do so causes sickness. 825 753

When a hunter kills a bear, he must place either the skull or the whole head in a tree near the scene of the kill, otherwise he will become blind. In some families, the man removes only an eye, places it in a notched stick and set this under an over- 732

1;McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

224 hanging rock where no rain can penetrate. Long ago, some
[732] hunter failed to do this and became blind in consequence, hence the rite has since been carried out.

When a hunter is in the field, his wife must not swing. To do this causes him to go up into lofty and dangerous places as she rises on the swing, and also destroys the power laboriously accumulated by ceremonial chastity.

Ritual Acts

796 Ceremonialism is an extremely important aspect of Bella
226 Coola life, but most of their rites are social or religious rather
789 than magical, so that descriptions of them belong to other *chapters*. *In connection with the taking of the first olachen* and salmon, however, a number of ritual acts are performed to bring about desired ends; the element of propitiation is not entirely absent, but on the whole they may be considered as magical.

Rites connected with the first olachen

226 At the height of the olachen run, the fish are so abundant
796 that they can be taken profitably in large purse-nets. They
574 do not, however, come simultaneously, and eager fishermen keep watching for their arrival and catching the straggling forerunners in hand dip-nets. These fish must not be eaten immediately. Each fisherman arranges a box in the front part of his house in which he deposits them as taken; if several men are doing this in a single dwelling, one box for each will be arranged near the front-door. Whenever a dance is held, eagle down is blown over the receptacle to placate the olachen and prevent them from being disturbed by the noise. As soon as a man has caught enough for a feast, he invites all his fellows to his house and the fish are distributed. It is taboo for any woman to share this meal, and it is most improper for a man to summon his neighbours until he has enough olachen to allow each guest to carry home a plentiful supply for his family. In former times, there used to be a number of meals of this kind,